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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

JOHNSON, TIMOTHY M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2625

DATE MAILED: 12/24/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/755,046

Applicant(s)

KATSUYAMA, YUTAKA

Examiner

Timothy M Johnson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17,19,30,32,41 and 43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17,19,30,32,41 and 43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 08/909,137.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 8-9. 6) ☐ Other: .

Claim for Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No. 08/909,137, filed on August 11, 1997.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
3. Claims 17, 30, and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

For claims 17, 30, and 41, all on the last line, "almost overlap" is vague and indefinite.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.
5. Claims 19, 32, and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wang, 5,307,422.

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For claim 19, ruled line extracting comprising straight line extracting means for extracting information of one or more straight line patterns from an input image is provided by Wang in at least c. 5, lines 15-50 and lines 65-68, by extracting information of units, which can consist of border lines considered as ruled lines, and inputs an image by at least block 12 in Fig. 1. A straight line deleting means for deleting a straight line pattern composed of segment patterns which are larger than a threshold value, among the one or more straight line patterns is provided by Wang in at least the paragraph bridging cols. 5-6.

For claims 32 and 43, see the rejection of at least claim 19, and see Wang in at least the paragraph bridging cols. 4-5, where the invention can be implemented in either hardware or software.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 17, 30, and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Wang, 5,307,422, in view of Abe, 5,129,012.

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For claim 17, ruled line extracting comprising straight line extracting means for extracting information of one or more straight line patterns from an input image is provided by Wang in at least c. 5, lines 15-50 and lines 65-68, by extracting information of units, which can consist of border lines considered as ruled lines, and inputs an image by at least block 12 in Fig. 1. See also Abe in at least the last two full paragraphs in c. 5, and Fig. 1c, steps 204-211, for extraction, and the paragraph bridging cols. 4-5, which also indicate ruled lines, and inputs an image in at least the first sentence in the abstract. A straight line deleting means for deleting a shorter pattern of two straight line patterns which are included in the one or more straight line patterns is provided by Wang in at least the paragraph bridging cols. 5-6, where short units, which can be lines, are deleted from at least one of straight line units. See also Abe in at least Figs. 2A-7B showing straight line patterns, which are deleted, in at least the paragraph bridging cols. 9-10, the paragraph bridging cols. 10-11, and c. 13, lines 54-64. Thus, at least in the broad sense, Abe provides for deleting at least the shorter of two straight line patterns, since the lines are deleted. Wang does not explicitly provide for the straight line patterns almost overlapping. However, it would've been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Wang provides for lines that almost overlap given any document in general (especially a complex document – see Wang in the abstract), having lines that almost overlap is a clear possibility in any document, and Wang explicitly teaches deleting the shorter of such line units. For further evidence of the conventionality of lines that almost overlap, see at least some of

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the lines of Abe in at least Figs. 2A-7B, some of which do not overlap, and are shorter than others.

For claims 30 and 41, see the rejection of at least claim 17, and Abe in c. 5, lines 34-38, indicating a method and program (i.e. routine) by using a processor, and see Wang in at least the paragraph bridging cols. 4-5, where the invention can be implemented in either hardware or software.

Contact Information

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Timothy M. Johnson whose telephone number is (703) 306-3096, or the Supervisory Patent Examiner, Bhavesh M. Mehta, whose telephone number is (703) 308-5246.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone numbers are (703) 305-4700, (703) 305-4750, (703) 305-9600, or (703) 305-3800, or Customer Service at (703) 306-0377.

The Group Art Unit FAX number is 703-872-9306.

Timothy M. Johnson
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2625
December 11, 2003


TIMOTHY M. JOHNSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER